



CAFTA-DR Environmental Cooperation

Regional Program Highlights

April 2012

Background

To date, the United States has committed over \$82 million to fund cooperative environmental projects under the CAFTA-DR Environmental Cooperation Agreement Work Plan. As implementation of cooperative activities under the Work Plan continues, the CAFTA-DR Parties recognize the importance of: (1) identifying certain overarching goals for that cooperation; and (2) structuring work plan activities within high priority thematic areas.

Goals

The CAFTA-DR Parties recognize that through environmental cooperation they are striving to achieve the following long-term, overarching goals:

- Compliance with CAFTA-DR Environment Chapter obligations to:
 1. Ensure that their environmental laws and policies provide for and encourage high levels of environmental protection;
 2. Effectively enforce their environmental laws;
 3. Ensure that judicial, quasi-judicial, or administrative proceedings are available to sanction or remedy violations of environmental laws; and
 4. Improve implementation of, and compliance with, multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs);
- Improved protection and conservation of the environment, including natural resources;
- Transparency and public participation in environmental decision-making;
- A culture of environmental protection and compliance with environmental laws through, among other things, the promotion of economic opportunities, voluntary measures to enhance environmental performance, and job creation.

Cooperation Themes

To facilitate Work Plan implementation and achievement of these goals, the CAFTA-DR Parties have structured Work Plan activities under five cooperation themes. CAFTA-DR Parties work cooperatively with civil society, contractors, and government agencies to implement activities under each of the following themes.

- Theme A: Institutional Strengthening for Effective Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Laws;
- Theme B: Biodiversity and Conservation;





- Theme C: Market-based Conservation;
- Theme D: Improved Private-Sector Environmental Performance; and
- Theme E: Implementation of Specific Obligations under CAFTA-DR.

Theme A: Institutional Strengthening for Effective Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Laws

Synopsis:

Strong environmental institutions, laws and policies and their effective enforcement, effective implementation of MEAs, and a civil society actively engaged in environmental decision-making and enforcement are key factors in ensuring that CAFTA-DR countries comply with their free trade agreement obligations. CAFTA-DR Environmental Cooperation Programs help to ensure that environmental laws and policies provide for and encourage high levels of environmental protection and are effectively enforced.

Highlight Activities:

- CAFTA-DR countries adopted a Pollutant Release and Transfer Registry (PRTR) work plan to track the release and transport of chemicals, waste, and hazardous materials according to United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) guidelines. To follow through on this plan, countries are creating national committees for oversight.
- CAFTA-DR governments are adopting the Wastewater Regulatory Model endorsed by CAFTA-DR governments in 2005 to confront the widespread problem of degradation due to untreated runoff. The model includes baseline discharge information, a permitting program, discharge parameters, and mechanisms for enforcement and compliance.
- With USAID support, program partners supplied CAFTA-DR countries with refurbished particulate matter (PM10) equipment for urban air quality monitoring stations, strengthening capacity to effectively monitor PM10 and ensure air quality data is representative and accurate.
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) worked in collaboration with the Regional Technical Committee on Chemical Safety to review countries' implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and to develop an approach for a regional strategy.
- With OES support, the Lincoln School brought over 270 kids from 45 different schools across Costa Rica to participate in a two day workshop on how to engage with their national and local governments on environmental matters. During this two day





environmental congress, named ECO-1, these high school students designed a waste water treatment strategy for their government to use a perennial grass as a natural filter.

- EPA has trained over 500 environmental compliance inspectors, prosecutors, and enforcement personnel in the CAFTA-DR region. Trained individuals are now training local inspectors, investigators, police officers, prosecutors, and environment ministry officials to strengthen effective enforcement of environmental laws.
- EPA and program partners trained 140 CAFTA-DR technicians on the principles of Environmental Impact Assessment review for the commercial mining, tourism, and energy sectors. To institutionalize these trainings and ensure long-term impact, EPA also facilitated two coordination meetings to develop sector-specific guidelines for reviewing EIAs.
- USAID, EPA and CCAD are working with Central American countries to develop a Regional Solid Waste Policy Framework that countries are using to develop national regulations and policies.
- USAID and EPA developed a regional model to harmonize the administrative procedures for citizens to file concerns that a CAFTA-DR party is failing to enforce its environmental regulations. This model facilitates active public participation in environmental enforcement.

Theme B: Biodiversity and Natural Resource Conservation

Synopsis:

Habitat loss and illegal harvesting and trade adversely impact many ecosystems and species in CAFTA-DR countries, as well as the long-term economic and environmental development in the region. To combat illegal trade and protect wildlife and habitat, the Environmental Cooperation Program is working to strengthen enforcement of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and to improve protection and management of forest resources and protected areas. Efforts in this area include strengthening scientific and institutional capacity of CITES authorities, training officials responsible for implementation of CITES, building intelligence networks, educating the public about the economic and ecological importance of protecting wildlife, supporting new or existing animal rescue centers, preventing illegal logging, and promoting the sustainable management of wildlife and protected areas.

Highlight Activities:

- The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) worked in partnership with the CITES





Secretariat to develop long-term, sustainable regional training to decrease trafficking of illegal wildlife and to protect biodiversity. As a part of this effort, DOI updated a comprehensive regional reference book of CITES listed species and distributed 500 copies to CAFTA-DR countries, meeting the CITES requirement that each country maintain a complete list of CITES species within its borders.

- The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) worked with local partners on the Jaguar Conservation Corridor Plan, an essential achievement for the ongoing effort to establish a Mesoamerican Biological Corridor that allows for jaguar migration. WCS identified jaguar dispersal routes, evaluated protected areas, and worked with ranchers and indigenous communities to spread awareness about interaction with jaguars.
- WWF-TRAFFIC worked in the region to strengthen capacity of inspection personnel to enforce wildlife trade controls under CITES. TRAFFIC distributed 600 CITES species and product identification guides to local authorities and provided over 500 individuals with training on biodiversity conservation.
- Humane Society International (HSI) conducted a number of outreach and public awareness projects centered on biodiversity and endangered species conservation. They awarded 29 NGOs grants for public outreach campaigns that reached at least seven million local people in the region.
- With OES support, DOI is working directly with Central American wildlife law enforcement officials to implement a regional wildlife law enforcement network that will improve integration of law enforcement efforts to prevent illegal wildlife trade in Central America.
- The International Coral Reef Action Network ran a 5-day Crime Scene Investigation workshop in the Dominican Republic for local CAFTA–DR authorities. It focused on underwater techniques for collection of evidence and documentation of human-induced harm to coral reefs. The workshop resulted in development of a toolkit to support regional enforcement, which has received international attention.
- The U.S. Forest Service is working with Honduras to combat illegal logging and improve forest management. This includes strengthening protection of the country’s big-leaf mahogany, an ecologically rare species that is highly valuable and widely traded. This work is helping Honduras meet treaty obligations under CITES and promote sustainable forestry practices.





Theme C: Market Based Conservation

Synopsis:

Ecotourism and sustainable agriculture, forest, and fishery product production present important opportunities to support economic growth, sustainable natural resource management, and environmental protection. CAFTA-DR ECA-sponsored programs focus on communities around protected areas, positively influencing the livelihoods of tens of thousands of individuals and demonstrating that free-trade agreements, environmental preservation, and income growth for the poor are complementary.

Highlight Activities:

- Rainforest Alliance worked with farmers in the CAFTA-DR region to disseminate information on sustainable agriculture standards. As a part of this effort, Rainforest Alliance developed a farm assessment guide for farmers to use when implementing improved farming techniques. Rainforest Alliance trained more than 900 people in best agricultural practices in efforts to make their farming practice more environmentally friendly and to increase market shares and income from their products.
- Rainforest Alliance worked with cacao, coffee, and banana farmers on environmentally friendly farming practices to increase their market shares and income from products. Throughout the entire CAFTA-DR region, over 2,700 farms received Rainforest Alliance Certification.
- Humane Society International (HSI) is working to improve the livelihood of Nicaraguan, Costa Rican, and Guatemalan cacao producers helping local technicians implement farming practices necessary for organic certification standards. Through this effort, HSI has supported over 450 farmers in the CAFTA-DR region to prepare for organic cacao certifications.
- TechnoServe worked with coffee producers in El Salvador to improve the quality of coffee from cooperatives and increase market access and visibility for small and medium-scale farms. Through participating in the project, producers increased their production by approximately 1,500 quintals (QQ) of coffee beans per harvest and realized almost a \$100/QQ increase in sales price.

Theme D: Improve Private Sector Environmental Performance

Synopsis:

Companies can improve environmental performance and reduce operating costs by reducing water use, increasing energy efficiency, and preventing the generation or release of





contaminants. Through the adoption of Environmental Management Systems (EMS) and cleaner production initiatives, companies also improve their economic savings and competitive advantage. The Environmental Cooperation Program works to improve private sector environmental performance through cleaner productions strategies and incentives, Environmental Management Systems, voluntary mechanisms and public-private partnerships, and the strengthening of human resources and institutions in cleaner production.

Highlight Activities:

- USAID and CCAD have worked with CAFTA-DR governments to develop a regional policy on cleaner production and energy efficiency. As countries pursue the implementation of this policy, they are developing cleaner production regulations, standards, and procedures for environmental auditing and management systems.
- World Environment Center (WEC) is working in El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Nicaragua through partnerships with Coca-cola, Marriott, and Wal-Mart to promote private partnerships that encourage the use of cleaner production practices throughout their supply chains. WEC works one-on-one with their small and medium size suppliers, and as of June 2010 companies in El Salvador and Guatemala had already reduced water consumption by over 16,000m³, saved 185,000 gallons of fuel, and reduced CO2 emissions by 1,162 tons.
- USAID facilitated the creation of a regional, high-profile cleaner production award. This award honors enterprises that have effectively implemented cleaner production and environmental compliance initiatives. In the region, the award encourages continuous improvement for products, processes, and services through better environmental performance.

Theme E: CAFTA-DR Specific Obligations

Synopsis:

Under CAFTA-DR, countries must meet their obligations to maintain an environmental secretariat to review submissions on enforcement matters and develop factual records as set out in Articles 17.7 and 17.8 of the Agreement. Countries must also meet their obligations for programmatic monitoring and evaluation and CAFTA-DR Environmental Program coordination and administration.

Highlight Activities:

- The CAFTA-DR Parties established a Secretariat for Environmental Matters to receive and process submissions from the public alleging that a CAFTA-DR Party is failing to enforce its environmental laws effectively. The Secretariat is currently up and running





and has received twenty-two submissions from the public thus far. The Secretariat is also undertaking an aggressive outreach campaign to disseminate information on submissions and environmental enforcement.

- The Organization of American States (OAS) is evaluating the effectiveness of CAFTA-DR activities to achieve the long term goals established by CAFTA-DR Parties. To this end, the OAS worked with country representatives and program implementers to gather program-wide performance indicators and has prepared two evaluation reports.

